

## **I. INTRODUCTION**

The goal of these procedures is to improve the level and quality of participation in the budget process to the benefit of individual courts and the Judiciary as a whole. The mechanism for accomplishing this goal is through improving:

1. knowledge of the budget process;
2. information about budget status,
3. definitions of areas of discretion, and
4. communication with judges, staff, those outside the judiciary, and among those responsible for the budget.

The executive and legislative branches of government establish much of the budget process. They develop the budget framework that applies to the courts as well as to executive agencies and departments. The Judicial Council, which *ultimately* is responsible for the administration of the judiciary and its budget, has further developed that framework as it applies to the judiciary.

The budget policies of the Judicial Council (refer to attached Budget and Fiscal Management rule of the Judicial Council, Appendix A) rely upon the involvement of presiding judges, state level court administrators, Court Executives, and appropriate local court clerks. Each of these individuals is responsible for the budget of the judiciary on a day-to-day basis. The efficiency of the system as a whole depends in large part upon their involvement. The merits of the decisions made by the Judicial Council, the Governor, and the Legislature depend heavily upon the integrity and reliability of the information provided by those who work with budget issues on a daily basis.

Participation in the budget process carries with it substantial personal responsibility. The continued good health of the organization depends upon the sound management of local budgets. Sound budget management requires cooperation and self-reliance, precise information, and effective communication.